NIMS Terms and Definitions: Institutionalizing the use of ICS

To "institutionalize the use of ICS" means that government officials, incident managers and emergency response organizations at all jurisdictional levels adopt the Incident Command System and launch activities [in FY 2005] that will result in the use of the Incident Command System for all incident response operations. Actions to institutionalize the use of ICS take place at two levels – policy and organizational/operational.

At the policy level, institutionalizing the ICS means government officials, i.e., governors, mayors, county and city managers, tribal leaders and others:

- 1. Adopt through the ICS through executive order, proclamation or legislation as the jurisdiction's official incident response system; and
- 2. Direct that incident managers and response organizations in their jurisdictions train, exercise and use the ICS in their response operations.

At the organizational/operational level, evidence that incident managers and emergency response organizations are institutionalizing the ICS would include the following:

- 1. ICS is being integrated into functional and system-wide emergency operations policies, plans and procedures;
- 2. ICS training is planned or under way for responders, supervisors and command level officers;
- Responders at all levels are participating in and/or coordinating ICSoriented exercises that involve responders from multi-disciplines and jurisdictions.

While it is not expected that all these activities would be completed in FY 2005, it is expected that where possible they will be and that, at a minimum, planning for such activities would be initiated and actions taken to put them into practice.

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